

ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 84

This measure should have been titled the “Special-Interest-Hidden-Agenda Bond” because it was placed on the ballot by special interests who don’t really want you to know where all your money is going to be squandered. Every special interest that helped get this boondoggle on the ballot will get a share of the taxpayers’ money, but ordinary taxpayers will get nothing from this bond but higher taxes for the next three decades.

This so-called “water bond” has no funding for dams or water storage! The authors set aside billions for bureaucratic studies, unnecessary protections for rats and weeds, and other frivolous projects, but they couldn’t find a single penny to build freshwater storage for our state’s growing population. You have to read the text to believe it.

Only a very small portion of the funds from this enormous bond would be available for repair and maintenance of our levees, but Proposition 1E was placed on the ballot by the Legislature to provide \$4,090,000,000 for these same levees. Common sense dictates that we should wait to see how that money is spent before we authorize another \$5,388,000,000 in new spending. It would be foolish to lock permanent spending formulas in place, as this initiative seeks to do, when we have no idea what our future needs will be once the funds from Proposition 1E are spent.

This bond represents a huge tax increase. The proponents seem eager to avoid this unpleasant fact, but voters need to understand that bond repayment takes priority over all

other government spending. Once issued, bonds cannot be cancelled, repudiated, or discharged in bankruptcy; they can only be repaid with tax revenues. Our state already has a \$7 billion budget deficit, and there is no way to pay for this gigantic bond without higher taxes.

Local projects should be funded at the local level. This statewide bond is designed to force people in one part of the state to pay for local projects on the other side of the state. Why should people in Redding pay for urban parks in San Diego? Why tax people in Los Angeles to pay for beetle habitat restoration in Sutter County? This is poor tax policy, and it was clearly designed to benefit the special interests that put this measure on the ballot. We should expect local communities to fund their own local parks and improvements; statewide bonds should be reserved for state parks, colleges, and other capital projects that benefit the whole state.

What is worse, this bond allows unelected, unaccountable state bureaucrats to spend billions of dollars, with little or no real public oversight. Sacramento bureaucrats and special interests will love having a slush fund that they can spend without the need for public hearings and public votes in the Legislature—but we cannot allow that to happen.

Please join me in voting NO on Proposition 84.

BILL LEONARD, Member
California State Board of Equalization

84

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSITION 84

The opponent’s argument is simply wrong.

Proposition 84 provides clean water and protects our coast *without raising taxes*. It is supported by a broad, bipartisan coalition of public interest and business groups including the League of Women Voters of California, Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, and The Nature Conservancy.

Here are the facts.

- Prop. 84 funds crucial projects needed to assure reliable supplies of clean, safe drinking water.
- Prop. 84 protects all of California’s waters: our rivers, lakes, streams, beaches, and bays.
- Prop. 84 includes strict financial accountability, including a citizen oversight committee, annual independent audits, and full public disclosure.
- Prop. 84 protects our families from toxic pollution, floods, and other hazards through critical public safety projects not funded by other measures.

YES on 84: BENEFITS ALL CALIFORNIANS

Prop. 84 funds local priorities to improve water quality and supply in every region of the state.

YES on 84: SUPPORTED BY CALIFORNIA’S LOCAL WATER DISTRICTS

Proposition 84 is so important that water districts that provide drinking water to more than 23 million Californians all urge YES on 84.

YES on 84: PROTECTS PUBLIC HEALTH

Prop. 84 removes dangerous contaminants from drinking water, cleans up toxic chemicals that contaminate the fish we eat, and keeps dangerous polluted runoff from flowing onto our beaches and into our coastal waters.

YES on 84 protects our land, water, *and* public health, for our families and for future generations.

Join local water districts, conservation organizations, business groups, and public health experts in voting YES on 84.

ERICH PFUEHLER, California Director
Clean Water Action

JEFF KIGHTLINGER, General Manager
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

KAITILIN GAFFNEY, Conservation Director
The Ocean Conservancy